

# *The Heterodyne*

*Newsletter of the West Valley Amateur Radio Association*

## **January Meeting**

### **Annual WVARA Elections**

**Digital Mobile Radio  
by Edison Fong, WB6IQN**

**Wednesday, January 8  
Meeting Starts at 7pm**

Meeting Location:  
American Red Cross,  
Silicon Valley Chapter  
2731 N. First Street at Plumeria Dr  
(southwest corner) in San Jose

WVARA Repeaters (W6PIY)		
Band	Frequency	PL
6 Meters	52.580- MHz	151.4 Hz
2 Meters	147.39+ MHz	151.4 Hz
1.25 Meters	223.96- MHz	156.7 Hz
0.70 Meter	441.35+ MHz	88.5 Hz
0.23 Meter	1286.2- MHz	100 Hz

## **Club Net**

WVARA's club net is on the W6PIY repeaters each Tuesday at 8:30 pm. All repeaters are linked together during the net. The net script can be found at [www.wvara.org/net.html](http://www.wvara.org/net.html).

**Visitors Are Welcome!**

## **President's Letter**

As we enter 2020, I'd like to start by thanking our outgoing president of the last two years, Bobby (K0XI), for everything that he's done for WVARA. His level of dedication, leadership, mentorship, and numerous contributions are leaving some enormous shoes to fill, just like many of his predecessors. We also are thankful for our outgoing vice president, board members, and of course, our very diverse and exceptional club members and volunteers for everything they've done for us over the last several years.



Also, thank you all for the warm welcome to the president seat, to WVARA is a very special club for me. For several years I had been completely inactive in the hobby. My grandfather, Dean Bunger, the original W9KKN, got me into it in 1999, but only as far as a no-code technician license, and over time, I just moved onto other things. When I finally decided to get back into it a few years ago, the logical way to do so was to find a local club. At the time, my only criteria were that the meetings be nearby my workplace, meet during the week (not on a Friday night, for instance), and participate in Field Day (I remembered Field Day being fun from

grandfather.) Little did I know just what an exceptional club I was joining, several members of which I credit with getting me to where I am today in the hobby and changing my life.

It started with the WVARA Field Day experience in 2015, and I remember showing up to the meeting before Field Day, being too shy to show up at the meetings before that, filled out Jim's form, and before I could say "Please Copy 11A Santa Clara Valley" I found myself up on Mora Hill in Jonathan (W6PI)'s 40m SSB tent and Jack (W6FB)'s 15/80m SSB tent for the overnight shift on 80m along with Max (W6BG). I had no idea what I was doing, barely keeping up with helping the person operating the radio/mic with logging, but I remember getting some coaching and advice from W6FB the morning after, "quick, work him," he'd say. All I could think about was what a rush this all was, and I wanted more, not even knowing of this whole world of contesting outside of Field Day.

I went again to the WVARA Field Day in 2016, and it wasn't soon later that on a whim, I decided to join the team for the California QSO Party -- again, same experience, more of that, please! Ever since it has steadily escalated, and as I write this, I'm on the way back from the Caribbean, where I put in a competitive effort at the ZF1A superstation in the ARRL RTTY Roundup. I've participated in over 80 contests in the last two years.

But, hold on just a second, WVARA isn't a contest club, and there are plenty of those around here aren't there? Sure, we have a few "contests" that we play in, namely Field Day (which isn't even a contest, but we sure make it look like one), the California QSO Party, sometimes ARRL VHF, and now Winter Field Day. But, several members of our great club aren't interested in that part of the hobby at all. Why would I want to be president of such an organization? Well, from my perspective, what I've done in contesting is but one potential path, but it's not the only one. One of the most significant assets we have in this club is the diversity of the elmers we have available. We have some excellent CW operators, DXers, antenna gurus, repeater/FM Technicians, satellite operators, kit builders, solar/power system builders, and SOTA activators, and that's just the surface. If it's something you want to do in Amateur Radio, we probably have someone that can inspire and elmer you along the way to the next step, whatever that is. How can we recreate what happened to me in contesting for both new hams, or even those casually involved today, to pursue what they may not even know yet is their passion?

**For the next year, I challenge us all to do the following:**

- 1) We need to keep expanding our club, who else do you know that would also enjoy this experience?
- 2) We have to continue being an approachable, welcoming group that both enables and encourages our members (and guests) to expand into new parts of the hobby, leaving their comfort zone. Who have you helped with a project lately? What are you doing that others might be interested in? Please, write an article for the Heterodyne, or better yet, get on Jim (K6EI)'s speaking schedule. We'd love to hear about it! Make sure that if you see someone new at a WVARA meeting, you introduce yourself, make sure they feel welcome.
- 3) We have members that have, over time, stopped coming to meetings, how can we get them back into it? Call one of them up and check on them!
- 4) What do you want to improve about your operating skills, station, etc.? How can we help? Do something new for yourself, and help someone else out!
- 5) We can't do the many activities we do as a club without volunteers. You don't have to be on the board (though, please please join us one of these years) to volunteer; we'll take all the help we can get.

It's going to be an excellent year for WVARA!

73 es HNY,  
Bill/W9KKN/ZF2WF  
dit dit.

## **WVARA By-Laws Vote**

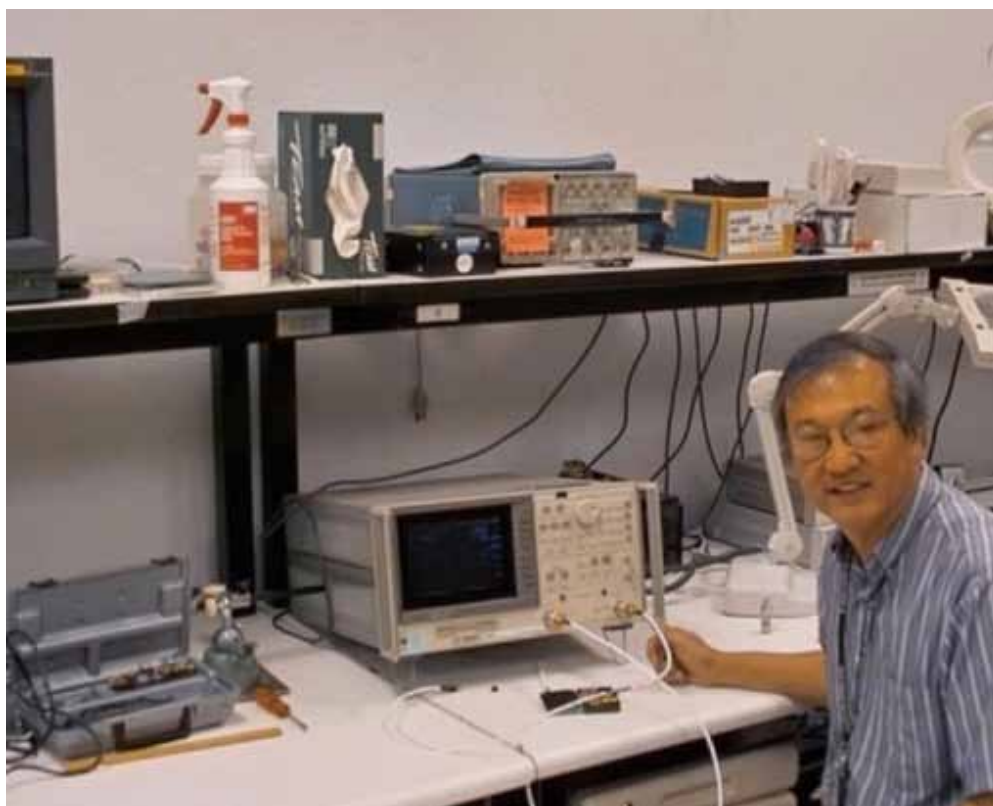
**A vote on revised by-laws for the club is planned for the meeting on January 8th, 2020. Please monitor the club reflector for more details.**

## **January 8 Meeting - Digital Mobile Radio by Edison Fong, WB6IQN**

The next WVARA meeting will be 7pm on Wednesday, January 8. This will be at our usual meeting place: the Red Cross Building on 2731 N. First Street (Meeting Room #5) in San Jose. Entry is via the side door on the west side of the building — look for the red WVARA sign. Visitors are welcome, and of course there will be chocolate chip cookies. If you haven't been to the Red Cross, "talk-in" is usually available on the Association's repeaters. Best choice would be 2m/220.

Several of us meet for dinner near the Red Cross around 5:45pm prior to the meeting at Dish-N-Dash (2551 N. 1st St. San Jose): <https://dishdash.com/> Feel free to drop by and join us for dinner! WVARA members also dine at Panera Bread at Coleman Avenue at Autumn Parkway, at the San Jose Market Center at 6 p.m.

At this month's meeting Edison Fong, WB6IQN, will bring us up to speed on DMR (Digital Mobile Radio). This mode is getting really popular. The radios cost about \$100-\$150 depending on the quality you want. All of them also have conventional FM. DMR is a full digital format



that is interfaced via the internet where one can 24/7 talk all over the world. The dream of working DX sitting on your couch is here. Since it is an open system originally set up by Motorola there are over 15 manufacturers of DMR radios – both hand held and mobiles. Learn how to get register as a DMR user, where to purchase a radio, how to program the radio and talk to the world without depending on propagation conditions.

Ed is a design consultant and has worked at Loral Space System, Microsoft and National Semiconductor. He has 25 years of experience in analog design for communications, data conversion and RF systems. Fong has 12 issued patents and has published more than 40 papers. He is a senior member of the IEEE. He also is on the faculty of UC Santa Cruz Silicon Valley, where he teaches RF Wireless Communications and I/O Design Fundamentals.



Prior to Ed's presentation on DMR, Steve Sergeant KC6ZKT will give a 15-20 minute update on WVARA's Winter Field Day plans and preparations (Jan 25-26). Winter Field Day is an emergency communications exercise focused on providing communications services in some of our area's most challenging conditions. Our WVARA team will be operating from a 2,840' hilltop in Henry W. Coe State Park east of Morgan Hill — sounds fun although maybe a little chilly! You can learn more about WFD at <https://www.winterfieldday.com>.

Looking forward to seeing you at Wednesday's meeting!

Jim, K6EI  
WVARA Vice President

## FARS Winter Banquet 2020 - February 28

WVARA members are invited to join the Foothill Amateur Radio Society (FARS) for their annual winter banquet on **Friday, February 28** at Michael's at Shoreline. Many WVARA members attended the event last year and had a lot of fun.

The speaker Dr. Andrew Cromarty, N6JLJ and President of Heath Company (Heathkit) will present "Living Dangerously: Building a 100-year-old electronics startup in California".

\$1,500 in raffle prizes will be given away. The banquet is open to all hams and significant others.

The FARS web site has a banquet page at: <http://www.fars.k6ya.org/banquet/banquet2020/>

Signups can be either online, using Paypal/credit card, or by USPS mail. ***All sign-ups should be received by 6pm on February 24. Mailed sign-ups should be posted by February 20 to be received on time.***

WVARA Net Check-Ins (W6PIY)					
Tuesdays at 8:30 PM					
Call Sign	Name	12/10/19	12/17/19	12/24/19	12/31/19
<b>Total</b>		<b>12</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>8</b>
AF6AE	Bill	X	X		X
AI6NT	Henry				X
K6EI	Jim	X	X		
KC6ZKT	Steve			X	
KF6EMB	Svend	X	X		
KK6HPF	Ross	X		X	
KK6VF	Kevin	NET	NET	NET	NET
KK6WRP	James	X			
N6BTU	Wayne	X	X	X	X
N9CU	Andy		X		
NU6P	John		X		
W6ESL	Tom	X	X	X	X
W6IA	Mark	X	X	X	
W6PK	Phil			X	X
W8RJL	Ron	X	X		
WB6JHI	Steve	X			X
WB6KHP	Dave	X	X	X	X
WD9DD	Russ		X		

## **2020 West Valley Amateur Radio Association Board**

President: Bill Fehring, W9KKN  
Vice President: Jim Peterson, K6EI  
Secretary: Mark Sayre, W6IA  
Treasurer: Russ Blahetka, WD9DD  
Past President: Bobby Barnett, K0XI

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Svend Jensen, KF6EMB, 2020  
Kevin Smith, KK6VF, 2019-2020  
Bill Ashby, N6FFC, 2020  
Chuck Kamas, AD6CL, 2020-2021  
Steve Sergeant, KC6ZKT, 2020-2021  
Dave Schultheis, WB6KHP, 2020-2021

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Club Web Page: [www.wvara.org](http://www.wvara.org)

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Internet Postmaster: Phil Verinsky, W6PK  
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### **Speaker Committee:**

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Jim Peterson, K6EI  
Jon Kelley, K6WV  
Phil Verinsky, W6PK

### **Club address:**

West Valley Amateur Radio Assn  
P.O. Box 6544  
San Jose, CA 95150-6544